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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [RW](#)
SUBJECT: RWANDA HOSTS SUCCESSFUL JOINT MONITORING GROUP
MEETING

REF: A. KIGALI 0393
[1](#)B. KINSHASA 0488

Classified By: Ambassador Michael Arietti for Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. On June 4, Rwanda hosted delegations from the DRC, the European Union, United States, United Nations, South Africa, and African Union for the fourth Joint Monitoring Group - Envoys' Level meeting. Participants discussed continuing implementation of the Nairobi Accord and its intersection with the Goma Accord and efforts by MONUC and the DRC government to disarm and disband Rwandan armed groups in eastern Congo. In a plenary session and later closed door meeting of delegation principals, the Envoys agreed upon: pursuit of "triangulation" efforts against the FDLR in eastern Congo; enhanced efforts to achieve full diplomatic relations between the DRC and the GOR; refinement of plans to "receive" several hundred RUD-Urunana forces in reception areas; increased "sensitization" efforts against the FDLR, including possible BBC and VOA Kinyarwanda programs and restrictions on FDLR leadership in the US and Europe; and support for the Goma Act of Engagement governing indigenous armed groups in the Kivus. Rwanda expressed concern over increased FDLR infiltration and movement of FDLR battalions close to border areas. MONUC proposed and delegates agreed to coordinated cordon-and-search operation to move these battalions away from border regions. Real proof of progress, as ever, will lie in the forest and mountains of eastern Congo, as the international community seeks to confront the FDLR. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Led by EU Envoy Roeland Van de Geer, delegations from the EU, U.S., UN, AU, and South Africa met in Goma June 4 with DRC and GOR delegations to discuss progress on the Nairobi Agreement and its intersection with the Goma Accord and MONUC and DRC efforts to end the threat of armed groups in the eastern Congo. Senior Advisor Tim Shortley, MONUC SRSG Alan Doss, Ambassadors Arietti and Garvelink, DRC Presidential Advisor Seraphin Ngwej, and GOR Special Envoy Richard Sezibera attended, as did Kigali-based ambassadors from the UK, Germany, and the EU.

[1](#)3. (C) In discussions in an opening plenary session, representatives agreed to redouble efforts to disarm and disband Rwandan armed groups operating in the DRC. In separate presentations, Seraphin Ngwej described the GODRC's enhanced efforts to encourage FDLR rank-and-file to enter DDR, and delineated the proposed calendar for RUD-Urunana and RPR forces to arrive at assembly zones (following their late May agreement in Kisangani to disarm)(ref B). Ngwej also described efforts by the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) to

engage and pressure the FDLR since the formal March 15 operational start of actions against the FDLR. SRSB Doss and staff members showed slides of joint FARDC/MONUC "triangulation" plans in four areas of North and South Kivu to press the FDLR militarily, disrupt its economic activities, and protect local populations. Doss called for the reinvigoration of the Joint Verification Mechanism, and said MONUC needed agreement from the DRC government to begin unannounced inspections of airstrips to forestall FDLR resupply and commercial activities. He noted the FARDC needed adequate resources to make a "credible, disciplined" effort in the field, and summed up the situation in the Kivus by quoting Winston Churchill: "We are not at the beginning of the end, but may be at the end of the beginning."

14. (C) Ambassador Sezibera detailed Rwanda's efforts under Nairobi to police its borders (noting the accidental helicopter intrusion in Ugandan airspace occurred in this context) (Ref B). He said the GOR was working closely with MONUC on encouraging FDLR "returns," noting that the numbers of combatants now housed in Mutobo Demobilization Camp near Ruhengeri were higher than previous months. Sezibera cautioned that there had been increased FDLR infiltrations in the last few months, and several battalions had moved significantly closer to the Rwandan border, potentially threatening economic targets along Lake Kivu (ref A). He asked that a fifth "triangle" of effort be conducted along the DRC-Rwandan border, to confront these FDLR forces. He also asked for concerted actions against FDLR command and control centers, and against FDLR leadership operating in Europe and the U.S. A Joint Monitoring Group Task Force spokesman noted continuing success on maintaining the cease-fire among the various Congolese militias, and the pull-back of various forces to reduce tensions. A Joint Technical Commission had formed two key subcommittees on military and humanitarian issues, he said, and had begun their work.

15. (C) Summing up the discussions, EU Envoy Van de Geer noted the following essential actions: enhanced military pressure against the FDLR; organized returns of FDLR factions ready to disarm; outreach to the BBC and VOA Kinyarwanda Services to assist in "sensitization" programs; joint FARDC and MONUC action against the FDLR forces near the Rwandan border; a reinvigorated Joint Monitoring Mechanism; the establishment of diplomatic relations between the DRC and GOR; and tripartite discussions among the DRC, GOR and UNHCR on refugee returns. Van de Geer said that he was "guardedly optimistic," and said the situation was "encouraging," given the combined interest and efforts of the assembled parties.

16. (C) In a later closed session of the EU, U.S., UN, DRC and GOR delegation leaders, the participants reached agreement in principle on joint and coordinated cordon-and-search operations along the Congolese/Rwandan borders. MONUC agreed to coordinate this with DRC and GOR military leaders. Regarding demobilization of RUD-Urunana forces, Sezibera said the GOR would be ready to send representatives to assembly points to try to convince disarmed FDLR fighters to return to Rwanda. The Rwandans noted that headline FDLR political leaders, such as Ignace Murwanashyaka in Germany and Callixte Mbarushimana in Paris have regular access to VOA and BBC Kinyarwanda broadcasts which they use to oppose the Nairobi agreement and FDLR disarmament. All participants agreed that VOA and BBC should be asked to provide opportunities for proponents of peace and disarmament to send their message to Kinyarwanda listeners, including FDLR foot soldiers. EU Envoy Van de Geer noted that EU representatives had met recently in Europe to focus attention on negative actions by FDLR leaders in their countries, with the goal of finding ways to counter their negative propaganda.

17. (C) Participants at the closed-door session also agreed in principle to hold future JMG Envoy meetings in the Great Lakes region. Van de Geer proposed that the next meeting take place in late July or early August, to be followed by another JMG Envoy meeting in early September in the DRC.

18. (C) Comment. The Rwandans found the meeting quite productive, and were pleased that the assembled parties focused heavily on the FDLR and actions to take against them.

The Rwandans were pleasantly surprised by what they considered to be the positive attitude and cooperation of the Congolese delegation. However, the actions to be taken in the field, in the "triangular" areas and along Rwanda's border, are ambitious and not without risks for both governments -- a cornered FDLR has the ability to fight back.

If this is indeed the "end of the beginning," the proof will be the forests and mountains of the Kivus, as MONUC and FARDC seek to confront the FDLR. End comment.

ARIETTI